

In the Claims

The following is a current listing of the claims, replacing all previous lists of claims in this case. Please replace all previous claims with the claims as shown.

Claims 1-46 Cancelled

47. (New) The stem cell line hES-NCL1 deposited at NIBSC under Accession No. P-05-001.

48. (New) An embryonic stem cell bank, comprising a plurality of genetically distinct stem cell lines, including the stem cell line of claim 47.

49. (New) A method of screening an agent for toxicity or for therapeutic efficacy, or both, the method comprising:

exposing the stem cell line of claim 47 to the agent being screened;
monitoring any alteration in viability or metabolism, or a combination thereof, of the cells of the stem cell line at the time of, or following, exposure to the agent; and determining any toxic or therapeutic effect of the agent on the cells of the stem cell line.

50. (New) A method of screening an agent for toxicity or for therapeutic efficacy, or both, the method comprising:

exposing an embryonic stem cell bank of claim 48 to the agent being screened;
monitoring any alteration in viability or metabolism, or a combination thereof, of the cell lines in the embryonic cell bank at the time of, or following, exposure to the agent; and determining any toxic or therapeutic effect of the agent on the cell lines.

51. (New) A method of producing fibroblast-like cells, the method comprising:

providing the stem cell line of claim 47; and
allowing cells of the stem cell line to differentiate into stem cell-derived fibroblast-like cells.

52. (New) The method of claim 51, wherein the fibroblast-like cells are produced for a therapeutic purpose.

53. (New) A method of culturing cells, comprising culturing the cells in the presence of the fibroblast-like cells obtained by the method of claim 51; or conditioning cell culture media in the

presence of the fibroblast-like cells and then culturing the cells therein; or culturing the cells in the conditioned cell culture media and in the presence of a population of the fibroblast-like cells.

54. (New) The method of claim 53, wherein the cells being cultured comprise stem cells.

55. (New) The method of claim 51, comprising using no specific stimulant for differentiation.

56. (New) The method of claim 55, wherein the fibroblast-like cells are produced for a therapeutic purpose.

57. (New) A method of culturing cells, comprising culturing the cells in the presence of the fibroblast-like cells obtained by the method of claim 55; or conditioning cell culture media in the presence of the fibroblast-like cells and then culturing the cells therein; or culturing the cells in the conditioned cell culture media and in the presence of a population of the fibroblast-like cells.

58. (New) The method of claim 57, wherein the cells being cultured comprise stem cells.

59. (New) A self-feeder system for the growth of undifferentiated stem cells, said system comprising:

cultured cells of the stem cell line of claim 47;

wherein a population of the cells of the stem cell line differentiate into stem cell-derived fibroblast-like cells, whilst the remainder of the cells of the stem cell line remain in an undifferentiated pluripotent, multipotent or unipotent state, whereby the stem cell-derived fibroblast-like cells act as autogeneic feeder cells for the undifferentiated stem cells in culture.

60. (New) A fibroblast-like cell line hESCdF-NCL as deposited at ECACC under Accession No. 04010601.

61. (New) A method of culturing cells, comprising culturing the cells in the presence of cells of fibroblast-like cell line hESCdF-NCL of claim 60; or conditioning cell culture media in the presence of the hESCdF-NCL fibroblast-like cells, and then culturing the cells therein; or culturing the cells in the conditioned cell culture media and in the presence of a population of the hESCdF-NCL fibroblast-like cells.

62. (New) The method of claim 61, wherein the cells being cultured comprise stem cells.